

AUG 22 1978

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

August 11, 1978

Mr. Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics  
Stanford University Medical Center  
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Joshua,

x f  
Some time ago you wrote me of your concerns with respect to DNA research. I want to bring you up-to-date on legislation currently under consideration to deal with this issue.

As you know, the Senate Committee on Human Resources, on which I am privileged to serve, ordered reported last July S. 1217, the proposed "DNA Safety Regulation Act of 1977". (Enclosed is a brief statement on that legislation.) Since that time, the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce has ordered reported H.R. 11192, the proposed "Recombinant DNA Act", and Senator Kennedy has submitted an amendment (No. 1713) to S. 1217 that modifies the Senate bill significantly.

Both the House proposal and the amendment submitted by Senator Kennedy considerably reduce the regulatory mechanisms in the original Senate Committee bill. Given the experience we have gained in the past few years with respect to DNA research, it seems that the complex regulatory structure we had originally suggested is not necessary. I am pleased, however, that there is general recognition that additional study of the long-term implications of DNA research, as I had suggested in my amendments to S. 1217, is necessary, and that that concept is preserved in all proposals.

I continue to support the "preemption" language in the original Senate Committee bill, which I believe offers a rational and realistic approach to the issue of state/federal jurisdiction.


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Another issue that I feel must be addressed is the development of appropriate means of applying the NIH-DNA safety guidelines to private sector research.

The DNA issue is indeed a difficult one to resolve. I am grateful to you for letting me know of your concerns. Your comments are very helpful to me in making a judgment on this most critical issue.

With best wishes,

Cordially,



Alan Cranston

Enclosure